



# State Partnership Program

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## Overview

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) partners U.S. states with foreign nations to promote and enhance bilateral relationships. The program primarily involves Military-to-Military (M2M) engagements, promoting defense and security cooperation to include non-commissioned officer (NCO) professional development, soldier readiness, equipment familiarization and maintenance.

The National Guard is an important force provider, and the SPP leverages the National Guard's capability to conduct sustained security engagements through M2M engagements to help promote a stable and secure Africa. Its four strategic goals are derived from U.S. national and defense strategies: (1) Build partnership capacity to deter, prevent and prepare, (2) Build partnership capacity to respond and recover, (3) Support partner defense reform and professional development, (4) Enable and facilitate enduring broad-spectrum security relationships.



*BISMARCK, North Dakota - Ghanaian Armed Forces Colonel George Biah practices rifle marksmanship with members of the North Dakota Army National Guard's 191st Military Police Company. (Photo by Sergeant Kayla Staub, 191st Military Police Company)*

## Objectives

The SPP supports the AFRICOM theater objective of enhanced regional stability through military professionalism. The SPP also supports interagency efforts by focusing on the following areas: peace and security, good governance, investing in people, economic development and humanitarian assistance.

## Benefits

One of the main benefits of the SPP is that its personnel are both citizens and soldiers/airmen, positioning the SPP to develop enduring relationships and partnerships – from the individual level to communities and government. It is this person-to-person connection and community involvement from the sponsoring states' military and civilian sectors that provide the means for supporting both the combatant commander and the chiefs of mission in achieving U.S. goals.

Major General David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, "There's absolutely no question in my mind our partnership, which was established in July 2004, has been a great success. The strength of the partnership is based on relationships, friendships, trust and respect."

## Facts & Figures

There are currently eight state partners in U.S. AFRICOM's area of responsibility: Botswana and North Carolina; Ghana and North Dakota; Liberia and Michigan; Morocco and Utah; Nigeria and California; Senegal and Vermont; South Africa and New York; and Tunisia and Wyoming. More than 100 state partnership events occur annually.

## Impact

The SPP, a key U.S. security cooperation tool, facilitates cooperation across all aspects of international civil-military affairs and it encourages people-to-people ties at the state level. The SPP supports U.S. national interests and security cooperation goals by engaging partner nations via military, socio-political and economic conduits at the local, state and national level.

## More Sources

[National Guard Bureau http://www.nationalguard.mil/](http://www.nationalguard.mil/)